

**City of Reading
City Council
Work Session
Monday, April 16, 2012**

Councilors Attending: F. Acosta, R. Corcoran, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, S. Marmarou, D. Reed, D. Sterner, J. Waltman

Others Attending: L. Kelleher, C. Younger, K. Mooney, J. Miravich, T. Vesay, M. Vind, L. Murin, E. Lloyd, V. Spencer

Council President Acosta called the Work Session to order at approximately 7:05 pm.

Council Staff Report

Ms. Kelleher stated that the Council office report was attached to the agenda, both hard copy and electronically. She noted that the 2nd draft of the Council Corner newsletter was distributed electronically this afternoon. She asked for comments before next Monday. She stated that a message from the Council President along with messages from Councilors from District 1, 2, 3 is needed to finalize this first (1st) issue. Ms. Kelleher stated that Council Staff will be working on creating a Face Book page for City Council within the next two (2) weeks. She stated that staff hopes to create an account that will allow all seven (7) Council members to provide wall posts and updates.

Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP)

Tony Vesay gave a power point presentation showing the components to the WWTP. He stated that a cost estimate will be provided on or around May 1st. He stated that after completing the Act 537 plan, the plant's MGD (Million Gallons per Day) capacity was reduced to 20 from 28.

Mr. Vesay stated that grants were obtained to partially cover the cost of the addition of an emergency force main, a new force main and a new flow-meter at Fritz Island. He explained that the project will first rehab the digesters prior in preparation for the addition of a new digester. He stated this digester project will cost 3.78M for construction only. He stated that a \$1M PA H2O-1 Grant was obtained to partially cover this cost. He noted that Council approval will be required prior to the start of the project.

Mr. Vesay explained the timeline to the project has yet finalized. He noted that the breakout of the project does not yet include the repair/replacement of the collection

system. He stated that the projected cost has been reduced to \$224M, which is a great reduction from the original plan. He stated that this project would be phased over time.

Mr. Vind stated that Financial Solutions is not recommending that the project be funded with a General Obligation bond. Instead Financial Solutions is suggesting a bond guarantee note, which will be guaranteed by revenue generated from the flow coming into the plant. He noted the need to amend the intra-municipal agreements (IMA) with the municipalities that currently use the City's sewer utility.

He went over the upcoming milestones and Council decisions as follows:

- Waste Water Treatment Plant Force Main (2nd Quarter)
- Waste Water Treatment Plant Digester Rehab (2nd Quarter)
- Utilities/Lab Building (3rd Quarter)

Mr. Miravich stated that the City is in the process of negotiating an amendment to the original Consent Decree for the design and construction of a new plant. He stated that the timeline will be adjusted after the DOJ approves the amendment.

A full review of the project, including various legal issues in Executive Session is scheduled for Monday, April 30th at 5pm.

RAWA Lease Agreement

Mr. Miravich stated that the RAWA Board wants the transfer of the 120 acres to justify the additional funds to the City. He stated that the most recent draft distributed to Council includes language stating that the Water Authority will not sell this property to a 3rd party without City approval.

Mr. Waltman expressed the belief that the watershed land should be protected and should not be transferred to RAWA control. He stated that amended agreements get sticky and used the example of the airport land transfer.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for Council to vote on the recommendation of the Solicitor, Mr. Miravich.

Mr. Acosta noted the need for Council to make a decision and noted that the document is tied to the current and future contributions from RAWA through 2014.

Mr. Miravich stated that the transfer became an issue when the City proposed selling 120 acres to Ontelaunee Township four (4) years ago.

Mr. Acosta inquired if RAWA could use the 120 acres as collateral. Mr. Miravich stated that the bank would not accept the 120 acres as collateral, as City approval is required prior to the sell of the property.

Mr. Acosta stated the issue would be reviewed further on Monday, April 23rd in the Committee of the Whole.

Quality of Life Ticketing Program

Mr. Agudo and Mr. Natale stated that they are present to discuss the program. Mr. Natale explained that the draft ordinance provides clarification for residential and Magisterial District Justice purposes. He stated that Codes already has the ability to ticket for alley maintenance as maintenance of alleys is included in the Property Maintenance Code. Under the Property Maintenance Code a property owner is responsible for the care and maintenance of his property, which extends to the midpoint of the alley.

Mr. Acosta explained that the program is under review due to the variety of complaints from City residents. He noted the need to consider the depth of the program. He stated that Council is waiting for a recommendation from the Administration.

Mr. Agudo stated that he has been tasked with a review of the program on multiple levels which will culminate in a report based on program outcomes within five (5) weeks. He expressed the belief that a review of the various program data will help to define the required modifications. Mr. Natale stated that as alley maintenance is already included in the Property Maintenance Code he would like the term “alley” added to the ticket to provide clarification for residents, as many do not believe they are responsible for the care of alleys. He stated that the amendment tabled by Council also provides clarification on the appeals process.

Ms. Butler stressed the need for approval of the appeal process so the Magisterial District Justices are clear about the appeal process required under the State Administrative Law.

There was next a discussion about the need for target overlays that will improve neighborhoods.

Ms. Butler will modify the amendment to remove alley maintenance and retain language about the appeal process.

Angelica Park Lease Agreement Update

Doug Smith from Alvernia, Mike Gombar, Solicitor for Alvernia, and Kim Murphy from the Conservancy joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Waltman suggested that language be provided that provides some protection for the City's interest. He stated that a 99 year lease is, in reality, giving the park away. He suggested that some reversion or take back clause be included with a timeline.

Ms. Murphy and Mr. Smith stated that further discussion about those items would be required as losing the lease after the property's improved would cause both organizations to lose the location, their investment and identity.

Ms. Murphy noted that the Conservancy's lease of the former City's former Engineer House is also a 99 year lease.

Ms. Reed stated that she can agree with the concept as expressed as the Park will remain open for public access.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for the public to understand the lease arrangement as they relate to the parks current use. She also noted her agreement with the concept, as the Park will remain open to the public.

Mr. Acosta noted the need for the signage to be changed which recognizes the City's ownership.

Mr. Smith described Alvernia's work to improve the Route 10 entrance and noted that nothing prevents the City from installing additional signage.

Ms. Murphy stated that the Conservancy has already moved into the former boathouse and has done some repair and cleaning.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested working with youth to design and install a City sign.

Ms. Murphy and Mr. Smith inquired about the format for the public meeting scheduled for May 23rd. Mr. Corcoran and Ms. Kelleher stated that after introduction, Mr. Smith and Ms. Murphy should be prepared to make a presentation for 15-20 min maximum and then open the floor for questions from residents.

The Work Session adjourned at approximately 9 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk